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No. 8.

# THE SENTINEL.

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BY A LADY AT A MILITARY POST.

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True religion is certainly calculated to inspire men with courage, and is not unbecoming in a soldier. Why, then, should it be imagined that the breastplate he wears necessarily shields him from all serious impressions, or that the fact of being a soldier should cause him to be profane, licentious, and to encase himself in the panoply of infidelity?

I would appeal to the soldier, and ask, Are you not an immortal being; and have you not an immortal soul? And if vicious principles have taken possession of that soul, and you suddenly lose your life before your sins are forgiven, will you not carry them with you into eternity?

Soldier, your business is to die. Remember your exposed situation, and your continual liability to death at any period—but especially in actual service; you may be cut off in a moment of time—your very calling is the place of danger; you must face the *cannon's mouth*, and stand before a volley of fire. How necessary, then, for you to be prepared; and by a devotion to God, an enlistment into

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the army of the Lord Jesus, the Captain of salvation, furnished with an armor that will make you secure under any event.

A circumstance occurred a few years ago at one of our remote military posts, which may be recollected by some soldier whose eye may rest on this paper.

One morning, as usual, the guard appeared on parade, and after undergoing the necessary forms attendant upon such a ceremony, were marching to their proper stations, and in turn were placed upon the posts assigned them as sentinels. Before the expiration of their tour of duty, the heavens gathered blackness, the wind arose, and the calm surface of the neighboring beautiful lake was in commotion.

The poor Indian might be seen in his light canoe, urging his frail bark to escape the impending storm. He might indeed, find a shelter in the gloom of the forest, but not so the sentinel—his is an important station—many hardships are his lot, and he must encounter them all; he must remain *steadfast at his post*; he must withstand summer's heat and winter's blast, hail and tempest, the appalling thunderbolt, and the lightning's vivid flash.

In such a perilous and trying situation was — placed at the period to which I allude. The thunder rolled heavily over his head, accompanied by chains of red lightning; peal followed peal, and flash succeeded flash, yet still, he stood apparently undaunted and unscathed. Whether his confidence was placed in the protecting power of *Him who holds the great artillery* in his hand, and shakes and lights the vault of heaven when he pleases, or whether he looked on and felt indifferent to the awful scene around him, I am not able to say; but a moment came, when the electric fluid touched the point of his bayonet, melted the hardened metal, ran down one side of his body, tearing and bur-

ning his coat, and rending one shoe from off his foot, at the same time striking him to the earth, a seemingly lifeless corpse.

Terror and consternation took possession of the minds of those who were witnesses of the scene. The soldier was conveyed to the hospital, where the surgeon of the post, a skillful and efficient man in his profession, after a length of time employed in faithful and persevering efforts, succeeded in restoring suspended animation.

With what interest and excited feelings did his comrades gather around him at the time, lamenting his supposed sudden exit from a world of joy and hope, to appear before the great tribunal of the almighty Judge of quick and dead. Some, perhaps, permitted the question to arise, "*Was he prepared?*" Others feared that he was cut off without one ray of hope for happiness beyond the grave. But how were their hearts relieved, when the first symptom of returning life was visible in his beating pulse and throbbing heart. *Then* was the time when they *may* have felt that the mercy of God was great, beyond their expectation, and adored him for his kindness in sparing a fellow-being, who, but for the skill imparted to his valuable physician, would, perhaps, never again have opened his eyes upon this fair world, nor lived a monument of the power and goodness of God.

When struck by the lightning of heaven, how happy for this sentinel, if he was prepared to die!—if *not*, and if sensible of his apparent nearness to another world, what would he have given in exchange for the assurance of the salvation of his soul.

Happy indeed is the soldier who is disposed to raise his thoughts to things eternal, and who has declared himself to be on the Lord's side. God has promised to preserve such as the apple of his eye, and to protect them as within the hollow of his hand.

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Soldier, come, then, and enlist under the banner of the Redeemer; engage in his service, and contend for the faith once delivered to the saints—separate yourself, and come out from the ranks of the enemy of God and of your soul, and peculiar blessings shall be yours.

Christian soldier, you have important duties to fulfil, a charge to keep, a heart to guard, and it becomes you, therefore, to be on the *alert*—declension in duty will produce apathy of conscience, and a want of care and watchfulness will extinguish the life of religion in the soul.

Be strong, therefore, and of good courage; strenuously maintain the honor of your King and Saviour; watch continually, pray without ceasing, and *never desert* the faith by which you stand, and by which you are to overcome the world and all its temptations, nor lay aside the armor by which you are to gain the victory over all your spiritual foes. Let a constant and lively exercise of faith in the Redeemer excite in you a disposition to be on your *guard*, for the end of faith is the salvation of the soul.

Your warfare will soon be accomplished—and having “fought the good fight, and kept the faith,” you shall be permitted to lay aside the tabernacle of clay, and be conducted to regions of infinite refreshment, where awaits you a crown of unfading glory and immortality.

“Religion is the chief concern  
Of mortals here below;  
May I its great importance learn,  
Its sovereign virtue know.”

“Let deep repentance, faith and love,  
Be joined with godly fear;  
And all my conversation prove  
My heart to be sincere.”

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